

# The Newport News Health Center

*Tearsheet requests to Mack I. Shanholtz, M.D., State Health Commissioner, Virginia Department of Health, Richmond, Va., 23219*

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The Newport News Health Center, the first such facility for the medically indigent on the Virginia Peninsula, was dedicated in January 1972. Located adjacent to the Riverside Hospital, the center handles the outpatient workloads of both the hospital and the Newport News Health Department.

The 68,801 square-foot facility provides a single roof for the entire city health department and contains the most modern medical equipment. In addition to a complex of administrative offices for various departments, the new health center includes an extensive outpatient clinic, a family practice clinic, five complete dental offices, specialty clinics, X-ray facilities, laboratories, and a

large pharmacy. On the center's main floor are classrooms and a 200-seat auditorium and theater.

In his dedication speech, Dr. Mack I. Shanholtz, State health commissioner, stated that the new facility contains all the elements of a health center of the future. These elements will provide the following services:

- Comprehensive diagnostic and therapeutic services for the entire family in both the clinic and the home through a family practice team program.
- Consultative services in many types of specialty clinics.
- Dental screening, together with prophylactic, restorative, or surgical therapy as required.
- Multiphasic health screening—in the planning stage—for pre-admission hospital patients as well as clinic patients, which includes chest X-rays, electrocardiograms, cervical smears for cancer, and basic laboratory tests.
- Counseling and guidance in

metabolic diseases, family planning, alcohol control, and other related services.

- Provision of pharmaceuticals.

These activities, according to Shanholtz, represent expanded or added functions and are not intended to replace the established public health services in environmental sanitation, public health nursing, venereal disease, maternal and child health, and tuberculosis. The center reflects an effort to improve health services to the community by coordination with private medical practitioners.

Emphasis in the center is on the continuing care of persons, rather than on episodic treatment of categorical diseases. The delivery of health services is organized to encourage development of a continuing relationship between the patient, his physician, and the other professional and supporting health personnel concerned.

*Dr. Leo Yoder, family practice resident, and Mrs. Inge Fischer, practical nurse, examining a patient in the Family Practice Center.*





*Dr. Rodney Keifer, health department dentist, with Miss Beverly Whaley, dental assistant, treating a patient in the new health center's dental clinic*

### **Family Practice Program**

A portion of the new center is designed to house the family practice program, which had been developed at the Riverside Hospital. The program is based on today's trend to return to the "family doctor" concept. Patients are assigned to a family practice team consisting of a physician and a public health nurse and they receive individual attention from the beginning

through followup treatment. To meet the entire needs of the family, additional specialty personnel are used as needed. Constant liaison is maintained between the family practice teams and other public health and hospital activities, Shanholtz pointed out.

The family practice outpatient clinic occupies a considerable amount of the new diagnostic and treatment facilities on a full-day basis. Equal or greater clin-

ical space, however, is available to scheduled specialty clinics that support the family practice operation with consultative and therapeutic medical and dental services. These clinics are conducted by local physician specialists and similar personnel provided under arrangements with the medical and dental schools of the health sciences division of Virginia Commonwealth University.





*Patients checking in at the new health center building*

### **Multiphasic Screening**

The multiphasic screening center is a clinic unit specifically designed to speed up the taking of histories and physical examinations and thus reduce the time patients spend waiting to be treated.

Physical examinations of large groups of persons are made on a functional basis so as to maximize the results of the examination time, expand the number of tests performed, systematize the procedures to be conducted by technical rather than professional personnel, and broaden the coverage provided. The system is designed and planned so that a computer can later be installed to computerize results for rapid analysis and instant recall.

The screening center is available to private practitioners, who may also use the center's laboratories and clinics.

### **Staff and Financing**

The approximately 100-member staff of the center includes 13 persons performing nursing and clerical duties, from Riverside Hospital outpatient clinics, and 35 staff physicians. Eleven additional persons have been added to provide the expanded services of the center: (a) seven persons including public health nurses, practical nurses, and clinic aides, (b) one dental assistant, and (c) a switchboard operator, an X-ray technician, and a laboratory specialist.

Supervision of technical ac-

tivities—X-ray and laboratory—is under the physicians in charge of hospital activities. The Riverside Hospital and the center jointly pay the directors of the two services. The 35 Riverside staff physicians work in the center's clinics without charge, as do the professional supervisors of the X-ray and laboratory services.

Revenues anticipated to help offset the costs of operating the expanded facilities and the additional personnel are as follows:

General medical clinic, 40,000 visits per annum.....	\$105,000
Head Start program (physical examination and treatment including dental care) 155 children.....	8,250
Work incentive program (physical examination)....	11,000
Home health service.....	22,000
Pharmacy operations.....	10,000

### **Benefits**

An especially important function of the new center is the provision of services to the community at large. The public health services are directed to the entire population, and they include control measures for communicable and environmental risk-related diseases, environmental improvement activities, health education and promotional activities, and health-related legal services.

Among the many benefits of the new center is provision of health services at less cost. By improving the quality of services, patients recover more rapidly and are discharged earlier. Diagnosis and management of many patients on an ambulatory basis or at home are alternatives to the expensive hospital bed care.

Hospital stays are shortened by referral to clinics for follow-up after discharge or for home health services. Home health services will decrease the return rate of discharged patients.